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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

RELEASE ON RECEIPT

SUBJECT: "Strike One for Oils and Fats" Information from Office Of Marketing Services, War Food Administration.

Every smart homemaker likes to know the score on the food situation. Right now fats and oils are much discussed. Butter is probably the favored subject in this food group. At least, in baseball lingo, many homemakers hope to make a home run with a stick or two of butter. But other members of this fats and oils team are also important, though less in the spotlight until the recent raise in ration value. Now with lard, shortenings, salad and cooking oils up to 4 red points a pound and five for margarine, many women are wondering why.

Most of the fats and oils we buy come from animal and vegetable sources - from cattle and hogs, from soybeans, cotton seed, corn, linseed, peanut and other oils. Before the war we used about 8 billion pounds of these home grown fats a year. But in addition to that we imported from the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, Africa and South America about 2 billion pounds of hard fats from the coconut and palm trees. Since the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 we had had only a small part of those 2 billion pounds of fats. Instead of importing we've not only had to increase our production on every acre possible but even export some of our own fats and oils to our allies and for military use.

Certain fats and oils have other uses than just as food. In fact, in 1944, 32 percent - almost a third - of our 12 billion pound supply, was used for other purposes than food. In industry, fats and oils are indispensable raw materials for a great many wartime manufacturing processes. As you know, both industrial and domestic soaps are produced from fats and oils. One of the steps in the making of synthetic rubber requires tallow soap which is an industrial soap - one of many used in the manufacture of explosives, drugs, paints, linoleums and lubricants.

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So - to make a long story short - our supply of fats and oils is not nearly as great as our industrial needs and our personal wants. What we as individuals want and what we need are two different matters, of course. Fats and oils are popular with homemakers because they give a meal that satisfying, stick-to-the ribs quality that is especially necessary for very active men, women and children. Dr. Henry C. Sherman, who is an eminent nutritionist, says that the average American family has been so free with the use of meats and fats that with either or both of these reduced, we can still enjoy excellent nutrition, especially if accompanied by increased proportions of fruits, vegetables or milk.

Since we can't have as much fat in our meals as we may want it's a good idea to recognize foods containing fat. Obviously, fat fish and fat meats heads the list. Some of the common foods that contain fat are egg yolks, cheese, and whole milk, as well as soybeans, nuts and peanut butter. Mayonnaise and baked products also contain fats.

Many families have given up for the duration cooking food in deep fat, and are also careful to use no more than necessary in pan-frying. One simple way to save fat in seasoning vegetables is to add the fat after the vegetables are in the serving dish. You probably have your own methods of reducing the fat called for in your favorite recipes. When it comes to using mayonnaise, try experimenting with combinations of mayonnaise and salad dressing in order to save salad oils. Another point to keep in mind is that over heating is the quickest way to spoil any fat. And when you store fat in the refrigerator, be sure it is covered and not near any food with a strong odor. Above all else, don't throw any fats away. When you consider the fat inedible, pour or scrape it into a can and turn it over to the butcher who will add it to the Nation's fat salvage barrel that feeds directly into munitions and other manufacturing plants. These are only a few of many possibilities for "going easy" on fats. Every woman can develop her own code of thrift in the use of fats and oils.

